

Biscuits

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Summary: A growing collection of drabbles about Astrid, Hiccup, and others who occupy Berk.

1. Chapter 1

This came about today as I was baking pretzels - they were in a can, not like make dough and roll it out. And turns out, our oven is broken. So when I set the temperature for 400 it was actually at 475 - so the pretzels were both burnt, and raw. So it is possible. They turned out okay, I mean, I ate one.

I own nothing, as always. Expect the experience.

Astrid had followed the instructions. She mashed the grain into fine flour. She beat the eggs before adding them. Butâ€|something wasn't right. The dough was too sticky and tough. It didn't want to roll out or be in any other shape other than a glob. Remembering the advice to not knead the dough too much or it would be tough, she threw the shapeless globs over the fire.

She waited by it, patiently, watching the gray-white dough expand and lose its sticky-dough complexion. But the globs were still globs, she sighed aloud. And should the glob be browning? Or yellowing at least? They were still paste-white.

Astrid sighed again, this time letting out more of a defeated irritation. The bottoms were darkening, burning. But the tops still looked as they had, although less sticky. She removed them from the fire and set them to cool. They lookedâ€|not good.

This was her first attempt to bake by herself. It was never something she had been interesting in growing up. Most other girls had, from their mothers, or aunts, or from whoever. But not Astrid. She had been fighting, learning to toughen herself not how to not-toughen bread dough. She learned where to strike and enemy for a quick death,

and how to spot weaknesses and armor flaws. While other girls were picking up how to bake bread, how to keep herbs growing in the cold weather, how to strip fish and how to prepare the meat, what to do with all the other bits of animals that they didn't eat, how to get mud out of wool, how much water to add to stew, when to add more and when to add less, and little things that Astrid didn't have the time or care to think about.

She and Hiccup had been married less than a month and all she has done is prove how worthless she is to have in the home. These biscuits are just another addition. She dared to touch one, and finding it just warm she pulled a chunk out of it. The bottoms were burnt, like she thought, but the insides were mushy, and texture disgusting. She couldn't swallow the bite she'd taken went to the window to spit it out. She tossed the chunk out with it.

Sighing, she leaned onto the window's sill. She'd have to throw them all out.

There was a sudden commotion from the skies, and Toothless landed with his known quickness. Hiccup was off the saddle and through the door before the dragon's wings stopped moving.

"Bad morning?" Astrid asked. Hiccup looked flustered, his face twisting as if he was thinking about a multitude of things.

"I wouldn't call it bad, just busy." Hiccup shrugged. He paused, and his green eyes fell onto the biscuits on the table. He reached for one. "I don't know how my dad does it."

"Oh, don't they're terrible." Astrid warned.

"They don't look that bad." Hiccup said, bringing it up his mouth.

Astrid reached out to stop him from biting down but wasn't fast enough. The reaction was immediate. Hiccup paused, looked down at the biscuit, then quickly as Astrid. He chewed, although she could see in his eyes that it wasn't enjoyable. He swallowed, and then cleared his throat.

"I'm sorry." Astrid said. She couldn't eat that tiny bite that she'd pulled off. She knew he ate it because he didn't want to spit it out in front of her. "I know they're gross."

"Eh, it's not that bad." Hiccup shrugged, the high-pitched lie in his voice too obvious. "You know, once you get past the whole burnt and raw thing."

He took another bite, this time trying his best to pretend that nothing was wrong. Astrid laughed, stepping closer to wrap her arms around his waist and buried her head into his shoulder. The hand that wasn't holding the raw/burnt biscuit came around her shoulders. She felt a kiss on her head, and smiled into the leather on his neck.

"I love you." Astrid muffled.

"I love you, too." Hiccup said. Was he laughing?

He was, and it was a marvelous sound.

I love happy endings! Leaves me all warm and fuzzy on the inside.

2. Wanderlust

I intern at a press right now and have a lot of time to think. This story came about during those long hours of quiet and thinking. Enjoy!

Wanderlust

The only people who said being chief was east had never been chief. How many times had Stoick watched his father come home with an ice block to his temple? He's lost count. How many times had Stoick come home with an ice block to the temple? He'd lost count.

As chief, everyone came to him with their complaints. And everyone complained. Daily. Someone had caused someone else grief and demanded justice. It was a never ending game of he-said-she-said. But, as chief, Stoick's word was final. He had to be solid in his decisions, strong about them and not in any way uncertain. He couldn't let people question his authority. But he couldn't simply pick a side. No, he had to know the entire story from both sides of an argument.

His father had told him many stories about the chiefs of past, about their mistakes and triumphs. Vikings may be stubborn but they can learn from mistakes. A chief that doesn't listen to his people ignites mutiny, inspires conspiracy, and welcomes an early grave. A chief who listen to his people sparks trust and diplomacy.

Stoick's father's father had had a cousin who had never listened to his people. He had been power-hungry and selfish, and a bit dull as it was told. His people were starving, and a mutiny had put his head on a spear for the entire village to see. A chief is for the people, Stoick's father had said in accompaniment of that story, wizened by age and experiences. A chief without his people is not a chief at all, but just a man.

The headache of chiefdom was returning. It never truly went away, only subsides, rested, waiting on the slightly provocation. He could almost feel the cold relief of ice.

From the village he could look up at his house, standing strong against the rainy sky. He had spent so many mornings, and evenings, looking down at the village. It was strange to be looking up at it, as any other Vikings would do.

A clap of thunder sounded in the distance. Stoick remembered his son's blunt absence that day. Hiccup had left in a huff the day before when Stoick tried to retell on of his father's stories, a good one about chiefing. Hiccup made it clear he wasn't ready to become a chief. But who was ever ready?

Stoick wanted his son to know everything that he knew, that he'd been told, stories passed down from father to son for generations. How could he teach his son when he spent more time in the clouds than on the ground?

He sighed. A new layer was added to his headache, a dullness that pounded, only provoked by Hiccup. He had hoped more than once that the gods who send Hiccup a son just like him, as infuriating to Hiccup as Hiccup had been to Stoick. That would give him a taste of what he'd put his father through.

Hiccup had stayed away through the night. He couldn't run away from his problems forever. Thunder rolled high, a threat of more rain. It had rained through the night and most of the day. He had hoped that it was the weather that had delayed his wayward son's return. Stoick looked to the sky, scanning the weather for signs of storms.

The clouds were dark and stuff with cold water. From the constant rain and drizzle everything in the village was wet. Vikings, sheep, even the bread. The rain had eased into a soggy mist that coated everything with a cold layer of water.

Stoick shrugged his great shoulders and a small shower fell from him. He took the steps to his house one at a time, thinking over what he would say to Hiccup. He did not respond to blunt anger, or force. It had taken a long time for Stoick to figure that out. Like his mother, he responded to arguments, to facts, to reason.

The sun was low behind the dark gray-blue clouds but as Stoick reached his front door it poked through. The sudden burst of sunset light cast the entire village below in a magical illumination. The mist that coated everything was lit with the bright pink-gold of the sun, like a shower of tiny golden flakes. Stoick dropped his hand from the door. Something this beautiful could only have come from the sun, the gods.

The dark waters of the ocean were still steely gray. The sun's light hadn't reached that far. Just the village was under the heavenly lighting. And Viking could admire this rare and natural beauty. It wasn't everyday the sun shone while the rain fell.

A memory came forward, and Stoick sighed. It was years ago that the rain and ebbed into mist and the sun broke through the dreary clouds right at dusk, to alight the entire village with gold. He had still been a boy, around Hiccup's age, and trying his best to avoid his father. Stoick laughed, he had almost forgotten.

But that wasn't what made this memory special. He had been the entire day away from the village but he hadn't been alone. The woman that would become his wife and his son's mother had been with him, Valka. They had spent the entire day together, just the two of them, just talking. That day had been the first day they had been able to get to know each other, just them.

They had wandered back to the village around dusk, and the sun was peeked out at last. Suddenly everything was doused in a golden glow. Little droplets of mist had clung to her dark hair, her skin, and her clothes so when the sun hit them she looked angelic. A halo glowed around her, amplifying her already beautiful features. She was, by far, the most beautiful woman Stoick had ever seen. She was infuriating, not unlike her son, but she had sparked something deep in his chest that no other woman could. That was the day that he knew, without a doubt, that she was the only one for him.

There, in that glowing dusk, he had kissed her for the first time. He had tried to do so sooner but the timing always felt off. That day, that time - everything was perfect. Like Hiccup, she wanted to explore, to see, to understand. She had a sense of adventure that could not be quenched. His father had called it 'wanderlust' but he hadn't meant it as a compliment. But that was just another thing Stoick loved about her. He loved everything about her.

When he's kissed her, and she had smiled at him, that timid smile etched itself onto his mind. She had laughed and he laughed with her. Her hands were so small in his, delicate but not weak, gentle but strong. Had she felt the same thing?

With that warm memory in the front of his mind, Stoick couldn't help sigh. Standing there, in near the same light as back then, it felt as if it could have happened yesterday. He felt an echo of the rushing in his ears, the hammering in his chest, the sudden fullness of somewhere much deeper. He could feel her hands in his, the softness of her fingertips on his rough axe-wielding palms. He could almost see the glorious mist-drops all glowing gold in her hair and on her cheeks.

The sun gradually sunk lower and lower, each moment a tiny bit less bright than the one before. The bright gold faded into dull amber, to dingy pink, to violet, to shadow-blue. Stoick stood until the last golden drop was paled. He wanted to remember those feelings, those thoughts, everything about that moment.

When at last the night was present, the mist was dark and foggy, and the cold air thickened with the threat of rain, Stoick opened the door to his house. He wasn't sure how long he had been standing outside but took immediate notice of the sudden warmth on his chilled face.

The hearth fire was burning strong and bright. Someone had kept the fire going. A log was burning away, maybe three or four hours old. But that was not what gave his son's presence away.

Toothless was curled around the hearth, an empty fish basket on its side, and white fishbones scattered around him. One stuck precariously out of the dragon's mouth. Stoick tiptoed passed the sleeping dragon and took the stairs one at a time. If the dragon was home then his rider must be as well.

Stoick didn't need to climb all the stairs to see into his son's room. Two steps left in front of him and he could see Hiccup sleeping soundly. A blonde head was nestled between his shoulder and neck, hair strung out across the pillow like spilt sunlight. Astrid held a fistful of Hiccup's shirt and curled her arm toward her. One of his arms was draped over her back, fingers dangling at her side. They were curled together like sleeping dragons, intertwined to the point where one could not wake without waking the other.

Stoick momentarily forgot the talk he'd prepared for his son. It could wait a while longer. Seeing the two of them there, together, so much in love with each other, reminded him of when he felt the same way. It filled him with him same joy, and some of a different kind. It was the joy of knowing his son was as happy as Stoick had been, of knowing he had found someone like Astrid, who loved him so honestly.

So many marriages on Berk were forged not out of love but out of have-to, out of ought-to, out of tradition. Few were for love, as far as Stoick could tell. He had preformed many marriages over his coarse as chief. Life was short and dangerous, love was unnecessary but procreation was a must. If a man and a woman liked each other, even just a little, they married. Love was arbitrary, and addition something, a seasoning. That was why when Stoick caught Valka he didn't let her go.

Stoick stole one last look at the sleeping couple before retreating downstairs. His talk could wait. With his first step the stair let out a whining creak. He paused, drew in his breath and held it, as he turned over his shoulder to see if he'd woken them.

Hiccup stirred, and sighed in his sleep. His eyes might have flickered open, but it was such a subtle motion that Stoick wasn't sure if he had really seen it. Hiccup's free hand twitched and readjusting, and lethargically searched for the girl sleeping almost on top of him. His hand found hers, and he followed her arm to rest his across her shoulders. Astrid sighed but did not wake. She seemed to nestle closer to his neck.

Stoick waited a few long moments before moving again. Slowly, one foot at a time, he retracing his steps backwards. Toothless twitched as he dismounted the last stair with a relieved sigh.

He couldn't help but smile. Still, there was a nagging in his mind. Hiccup shared his mother's wanderlust. Always wandering, always thinking, always looking over the horizon at something new. Even though Stoick loved that woman dearly, she still caused him pain. Stoick knew that Hiccup was the same. Many times Valka had caused him brief heartaches. Stoick feared Hiccup doing the same to Astrid.

Valka had been hard to catch, and even harder to hold onto.

A little moreâ€|melodramatic than I thought it'd be. But that's the rub, isn't it? You've got an idea and in the process of writing that idea it changes from what it originally was into something else, and yet it didn't change at all. Oh, the woes of being a writer.

3. Worry

I wrote this story and then I accidentally deleted it thinking it was something else. I spent a good half an hour searching through recycling bins before I gave up and decided to just rewrite it.

****Spoiler**** ****alert**** â€" if you haven't seen dragons 2 yet then there are some spoilers here. Not in your face spoilers, but undertones of a major spoilers. You've been warned.

Worry

The weather was beautiful and ripe for travel. Hiccup stood in the open doorway of his house but he couldn't push himself out of it. The annual chiefs' meeting was in a few days and he would need those few days to get there.

"Hiccup, the world won't end just because you were gone for a week." His mother said from beside the hearth. She was stirring some kind of green stew concoction that Hiccup had learned better than to ask about.

Hiccup grumbled. "You don't know the twins like I do. You can't leave them alone for ten minutes without something going up in flames."

Valka smiled a motherly smile she'd mastered in their short time reunited. "I promise to scold them extra if they burn anything down."

Hiccup sighed. That wasn't the only thing worrying him. He let his eyes wander up the stairs to the second floor bedroom where Astrid was sleeping. She hadn't been sleeping well the past few weeks and Hiccup didn't want to wake up her just for a goodbye. She had looked so sound this morning so he'd let her sleep. She can yell when he returned.

"Hiccup, she'll be fine." Valka reassured him.

"Yeah, butâ€¦|can you talk her into sleeping downstairs? She won't listen to me." Hiccup almost pleaded. He'd been trying to talk Astrid into switching bedrooms since she started to show. "I don't want her to fall down the stairs or something."

Valka half-laughed and it reminded Hiccup of pity.

"I'll see what I can do. But if she doesn't listen to you I don't know why you think she'll listen to me." Valka smiled. "You know how stubborn Vikings can be. Once they've set their mind nothing can change it."

This wasn't helping Hiccup. He fidgeted, realizing just how steep those stairs were.

"Hiccup, I promise, Astrid will be fine. I'll be right here if she needs anything." Valka paused her stirring to grip her son's shoulder.

Hiccup started to speak but couldn't come up with the words. "Butâ€¦|what if something happens, and I'm not here, and I can't get here fast enough?"

"Hiccup," Valka became serious, "If something does happen then there won't be anything you can do. Here or there."

Those were not the words he wanted to hear.

"Hiccup, she is a strong woman. She'll be fine." Valka repeated. She almost laughed at Hiccup's helpless expression. "She's not dying, she's just having a baby. It's nothing I haven't been through."

Hiccup knew that part was true. Maybe, if something did happen, his mother would be a better help than he would.

Valka laughed.

"What?" Hiccup asked.

"You remind me of your father." She said with a saddened smile. "When you were just a bump he would panic over everything, like the temperature of the water I drank or how much mutton I ate. The bigger you grew the more worried he was. In the couple months before you were born he came by the house every hour to check on me. He would sometimes send Gobber with some meaningless task but I knew what he was up to. It drove him half mad not to be able to be there constantly.

"Once, I surprised him in the village with lunch and he nearly lost it. People started at him then, too. I can still see the look on his face." Valka smiled with her eyes seeing something on the floor that Hiccup couldn't.

Hiccup felt his face redden. He knew she was referring to a few weeks back when Hiccup had stopped by the smithy and Astrid had surprised him. He panicked because his first instinct was that something was wrong.

"It's justâ€¦there are so many things that could happen outside. Dragons walking this way and that, landing and taking off, without worry or care to who they push over and nearly trample. And there's a lot of â€¦ stairs andâ€¦ steep paths." Hiccup sighed. He did sound a bit crazed. It was all this stress from running a village. "Just promise that you won't let her out of your sight."

"I can't promise that, Hiccup. But I do promise to keep her safe as best I can." Valka smiled.

Hiccup sighed. That was as good as anything. "Alright. I really need to get going, I guess."

"Do you have everything you need?" Valka asked, looking him over like she might see something missing.

"Yeah." Hiccup nodded.

"Your map?"

"Yeah.

"Compass?"

"Yeah, Mom, both of those are kind of built into my arm." He waved his right arm.

"Right, but what about emergency firewood? In case you can't find a wooded island to camp?"

"Yeah."

"A gift for the hosting tribe?"

"Yeah. I packed the shield this morning."

"What about a blanket? It gets cold at night."

"Yeah."

"Food and water?"

"Yeah."

"Supplies in case your legs breaks? Or Toothless's tail?"

"Yeah, Mom, I'm all packed." Hiccup finally said a bit exasperated.

Valka opened her mouth to add another item to the list but she closed it with a smile. She sighed and put a hand on each of his shoulders. With a motherly smile she pulled him in for a goodbye hug. Separating, she eyed the sky though the open door.

"Then have a safe trip." Valka said with a wave. "And have fun."

"Right." Hiccup said with one foot out the door.

"Hiccup? You're just going to leave without saying goodbye?" Astrid's tired voice called from the top of the stairs.

Hiccup lost his balance and nearly fell when he spun back around. Astrid was standing atop the stairs with one hand on the wall and the other resting on her swollen abdomen. Her hair was a tangled mess.

"You were sleeping, and you looked so peaceful, I didn't want to wake you." Hiccup said quickly.

Astrid started down the stairs one foot at a time. Hiccup stepped back in the house with his eyes set on her feet when his mother put a hand on his shoulder. She gently shook her head.

Right, right, Hiccup thought. His mother had been advising him for months now not to hover. Nervously, Hiccup waited until Astrid had made it down the stairs to walk toward her. She met him at the bottom and walked into his waiting embrace. He hugged her close, but not too tight, and kissed her head.

"I'll be back in a week." Hiccup said as he let go, reluctantly.

"Be safe." Astrid reminded him.

"I'll be fine, don't worry." Hiccup smiled. "You be safe while I'm gone. All three of you."

Hiccup stepped outside into the sun-warmed breeze. The door shut behind him and as Toothless hopped over, Hiccup heard a burst of laughter from the other side. He almost went back in but thought better of it.

4. Running Into Battle

From a Tumblr prompt, "Running into Battle."

Title: Running into Battle

Hiccup had never anticipated the impact that a thousand ships would bring. Not an hour before their blurry black mass clouded the horizon, Berk had settled into the stands to watch the races, hands in the air and voices ready to cheer. The sheep had gone up and up, high above Berk, and Hiccup and Astrid fought to get to it first.

Astrid won â€" she reached for the sheep but her hand never touched it. It continued its upward trek until gravity brought it back down. Hiccup caught it, but Astrid's mesmerized stare had taken his attention. His followed hers, to the black line forming along where the sea meets the sky.

The game was forgotten. Hiccup called the riders to their dragons.

"Prepare for battle," He cried over the churning crowd.

The stands emptied and were left hollow by comparison. The sky above Berk was filled with the wings of dragons, ready to protect their home, ready to resume the Viking ways, whatever the cost.

The ships did not heed this warning. They continued their formidable approach. Hiccup and Toothless were leaders of the dragon hoard, flanked on either side by those most trusted, those most loved.

Hiccup did not fear a battle but he did dread the outcome. Berk had lived through too few without injury or death. He did not want to think or imagine who might suffer that role today. But his mind rolled with the worst possibilities.

To his right, Astrid. Fierce, determined, relentless, fearless Astrid. He couldn't imagine life without her â€" without her there by his side, ready with comfort or a push, without her somehow knowing exactly what he needed to hear. When he had proposed he had envisioned a life with her, having children, sharing meals, growing old. What would he do if she were suddenly gone? What would he do if her side of the bed was cold tonight?

As if she could hear his thoughts, she caught his glance. A brave and encouraging smile met his fears, her confidence melting his doubts, a love shared and silently acknowledged.

He could hear her words clear, _Whatever you do, I'm right behind you_.

His mother, to his left, stood like a combating beast ready for the worst. Strong and knowledgeable Valka â€" destined to become the island's next elder. Hiccup had only just met her and he didn't want to part so soon. First his father â€" how could he call his mother next? He wanted to hear everything she could tell him.

And those he'd call his friends, shouting jeers at the imposing army, pumping themselves more than the enemy. Snotlout â€" loud, obnoxious, either brave or dumb, lazy but reliable. Fishlegs was a walking knowledge bank. What he lacked in bravery he made up for in brains. The twins were impervious to ill-will and were always taking life for the fun of it. Gobber had been like a second father, looking out for

him, and always giving him the harsh truth.

Life would be drastically different without any single one of them. Hiccup didn't want to prepare any of their funerals but he knew the odds were against him. If not today, then someday. It came with being Chief.

Chief " that was Hiccup. He had to be the backbone of Berk in times of battle. A voice was decisive and unquestioning leadership. Any way the day could progress, he knew the morning after would not be pleasant.

With all eyes on him, watching his movements, waiting for his signal, Hiccup threw one hand into the air. He took in the silence that followed. With the single swish of his hand through the air the dragons of Berk were set loose, a earthshattering chorus of roars shook the seas, fire blocked out the sky and turned the waters black, Vikings rose sharpened weapons into the air with their mighty war cries.

Whatever the outcome " now was not the time to dwell on what-ifs. It was the time for action.

XXXXX

I know, they're not technically running. If you lived on Berk would you run anywhere? Yeah, I didn't think so.

5. Picnic at the Cove

I found this little something on my computer when I was trying to organize things. I didn't remember it at first, but then I did, and wondered why I left it alone. I don't really know lol

Title: Cove Picnic

Hiccup was more than glad to get away from his father, even if it was just for the afternoon. Stoick had been on his about chiefdom this or responsibility that so long that it felt like weeks since he'd had the smallest time to himself. Toothless was irritated with him missing their routine flying and let him know it with acute but nonthreatening glares.

Even though his father had bribed him with the afternoon off, in exchanged for a sassless lecturing tour of the village, Hiccup was quick to made a run for it as soon as they returned to their house. Stoick had said that before.

Hiccup and Toothless took off and spent the rest of the afternoon, and a bit of the evening, in the sky. It was fair weather and the best for easy flying. When the sun began to make it's daily meeting with the ocean Hiccup steered Toothless back to the ground.

A familiar squawk rang to his left and a smile broke over his lips at the sight of the blue and yellow Nadder. Astrid waved at him from the saddle.

"Evening," Hiccup pulled Toothless in a slower pace.

"Where have you been?" Astrid called.

"Oh, you know, around."

"Well, come down to the cove."

>They landed side by side and Astrid slide to the cove's floor and Hiccup followed.<p>

"What's going on?" Astrid said almost instantly.

"What? Nothing. I justâ€|were you following me?"

"Only for a little while. I was here and I saw you fly over. I wanted to get your attention." Astrid shrugged. "You just what?"

"Oh," Hiccup sighed. He didn't think she'd forget. He tried again. "You're in a good mood."

Astrid smiled, adorably so, and grabbed his arm to show him why. She had set up a little picnic for two on a cloth covered stump. She meandered to it and sat down, gesturing him to do the same. She'd kept a basket beside it and took out bread, fire baked fish, and a jug of mead.

"You've been gone most of the day. Are you hungry?"

"Yeah," Hiccup's stomach growled. When he was flying food became a secondary need. With this meal in front of him he was reminded just how long it had been since breakfast.

"Are you sure it's nothing? You seem nervous."

"It's just my dad."

Astrid hummed a note of understanding. She had been through this conversation before and Hiccup didn't want to think about his dad or the village right now. He took a bite of the fish. It was cold but still good. With his mouth full he looked to Astrid for anything else to talk about.

The setting sun's light was shining gold through the trees. The wind rustled the branches and the light dances around the cove's floor. It shimmered on her skin. She looked different in the sunlight. There was a glow to her skin, a gleam that he'd never noticed before, like she was made of gold.

Had it been there the entire time? No, Hiccup thought, it couldn't have. He had seen her in the sunlight countless time. He'd stared at her in the sunlight countless times. This was different.

"What?" Astrid swallowed.

"What?" Hiccup jumped.

"You were staring."

"I was?" Hiccup blinked a few extra times. "I, uhâ€|I was justâ€|you look different."

"I look different?" Astrid repeated with a undertone that made Hiccup

nervous.

"It's not a bad difference!" Hiccup added quickly. He put his hands up in defense. "You're glowing. I mean, like, in the sun, you're shining."

"I'm shining?"

"It's nice, I mean, it's pretty." Hiccup swallowed. He should stop but he just couldn't. "You look nice."

Astrid stared at him from across the picnic stump which he suddenly wished was as wide as the ocean. He was perfectly within her attack range. He held his breath, expecting a swing, or a spat comeback, a retort, but she only stared at him. Why wasn't she saying something? Hiccup really wished she would say something. Was she mad? Confused?

She laughed.

"Why do you do that to me?" Hiccup exhaled.

"You're adorable when you're nervous." Astrid smiled.

Adorable? No, baby dragons were adorable. Baby chicks were adorable. Children wearing their father's boots were adorable. Men were not. Men were supposed to be tough, forceful, and admirable. Anything but adorable.

"I hate when you do that thing where you let me worry if your mad or not." Hiccup sighed. She knew he didn't like it but she did it anyway. It was infuriating but he liked that about her. Such a conundrum.

"I know." She laughed. She extended her arms into the sunlight. "It's a lotion I got from Trader Johan. He said it was a great moisturize with a warm tinge. It's supposed to add a warmth to my skin. I didn't think it'd work. You think it is?"

He nodded. Her arms held the same warm glow as her face, like she stood in the sunset sun too long and absorbed its orange-gold, and radiated it back. It was nice, and added to her already beautiful features.

"Yeah, you kind of have a halo. It's really nice."

Astrid smiled that girlish grin he'd only seen once or twice. She tried her best to hide that of herself. No matter how hard she tried to convince herself and others, with fulfilled threats, glares, or her talent with a sharp axe, she was still squishy on the inside. But Hiccup wouldn't change a single thing about her.

He took a bite of the bread. A bit stale, but it was alright.

Astrid picked off another piece of bread and tore it in two. She popped it into her mouth. "If it's really working I bet I look amazing naked."

Hiccup choked and Astrid laughed. She popped the other piece of bread into her mouth as Hiccup took a healthy swig of mead. She just loved

_making him uncomfortable. But, after years of this lovely torture, Hiccup had learned.

"If you want an opinion on that I'd be happy to lend my assistance." Hiccup prepared to take a punch or dive out of the way.

Astrid gave him a stare that was either offended or surprised. He couldn't tell. He readied his legs to move, but then she laughed.

He exhaled. She'd done it again. That's twice. Twice within the same few minutes. She was good.

X

Ah, adorable fluff. I love these two kids like grandma's cookies.

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6. Women's Worries

I always find this interesting little forgotten tidbits when I clean my computer files out. I must not be as organized as I previously thought. Hmâ€|

Title: Just a Few Worries

Setting: After Httyd 2

All morning Hiccup dealt with his irate stomach. He hadn't time to stop and eat. By midday it felt as though a dragon had crawled down his throat and tremored against his insides. He would miss lunch, but not by much, luckily for him his mother would keep something warm.

He and Toothless landed just outside his front door with the warm smell ofâ€|something soothing out through the smoking chimney. Even if he wasn't sure what the food _was_, or had been, when it came to starving he didn't care. He pushed the door open to see a heated cauldron over the hearth fire. His mother was standing beside it, stirring it passively, humming.

"Welcome home," Valka smiled. "I didn't think anyone was coming to eat."

"I'm starved." Hiccup said. He accepted a warm bowl of the soupâ€|stewâ€|or whatever. He sat down and his mother's eyes followed him. He spooned it into his mouth.

"What do you think?"

"It's good." He mumbled. It wasâ€|better. But still nothing compared to Fishleg's mother's yak stew. But that was something he'd keep to himself.

His mother sighed, with a gentle _hm_, and for a moment Hiccup watched her. He didn't understand women. Did she want to say something? Why didn't she just say it? Astrid did that same thing sometimes.

After a moment, and a few more spoons, she asked, "Is Astrid not eating?"

"She's at the arena today. They'll eat together." Hiccup said. "This week is all about the Deadly Nadder. Fishlegs thought it would be a perfect subject for Astrid and Stormfly."

"Ah."

"What?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing."

"Are you sure its nothing?"

"Well," Valka sighed. "It's justâ€|"

"What? Mom, you can tell me. I'm not going to throw you out or anything."

"It is probably nothing and I could just be making thing up." she sighed. She looked back at her stew/soup. "But, when Astrid left this morning, she was glowing."

"Glowing? What, like a torch?"

Valka laughed and shook her head. "No, no. It's a long story. Years ago, my mother told me one morning that I was glowing. I had no idea what she meant by it until I saw Astrid this morning. It's strange. I'd forgotten about that until today. I didn't understand it then, but now I do."

"The glowing?"

She nodded.

"What does it mean?" Hiccup asked carefully. Was she sick? Did she stay out in the sun too long yesterday? "Did you tell her she was glowing?"

"I did." Valka smiled. "I spent days trying to figure out what my mother meant by it. It wasn't three days after that I found out that I was pregnant with you."

Hiccup choked. He coughed and pushed himself away from the table. His face reddened and his pulse quickened. Suddenly, the house was too hot. He stood by the door where the cool air was seeping inside.

Valka laughed when she saw he was alright. She was looking at him with a warmth that he wasn't used to.

"You think she'sâ€|that's she's pregnant?" His words were dry and mangled.

"I do. And it's past time. You've been married almost six months."

Hiccup coughed on the air in his throat and his mother smiled.

"It's justâ€¦I meanâ€¦are you sure?" Hiccup gasped.

"I'd bet gold on it."

Hiccup gasped with his hands in his hair. The growling in his stomach had been replaced by a knot that pushed the air out of his lungs. His legs felt wobbly and he collapsed back into the kitchen chair.

"A baby?" Hiccup felt the knot moving upward. He was still getting used to being a chief, he wasn't ready to be a father too.

"Are you not happy?" Valka asked.

"No, I'mâ€¦thrilled, it's just a lot to take in." He rubbed his face. His hands were cold but his face was unusually warm. "I-I'm not ready to be a dad."

"No one is ever ready to be a parent." Valka said. She leaned over the table and touched one of his hands. "But, a child is an amazing thing. A miracle of life. Oh, the first time I held you I knew that everything had been worth it."

"Worth it?" Hiccup asked. "Did you think it wouldn't be?"

Valka sighed. "Well, to be honest, I was terrified. My mother had always criticized me for having narrow hips. She'd say I'd never survive childbirth. Through the whole pregnancy I had people telling me to prepare not to live. It was a difficult idea to come to terms with but I did."

"You thought you were _going to die_?" Hiccup was flabbergasted. He couldn't even wrap his mind around the idea of thinking you had a deadline, and watched it grow from your own body, thinking it would kill you.

"It's not uncommon, Hiccup." Valka said, a bit darkly. "Childbirth is complicate ding. There are so many things that can go wrong, so quickly, that are many women that don't make it. A baby is a miracle, but a baby in his mother's arms is miracle upon itself."

"And narrow hips mean that it's harder?" Hiccup asked. Astrid's hips weren't that wide.

"Yes, but don't worry about that, Son. I'm sure that Astrid will be fine. She's a tough girl."

His mother smiled kindly at him but the damage was done. He felt the knot tighten and push against his heart and lungs. He was having trouble forming scattering worried thoughts into words.

"Butâ€¦what if she doesn't make it?"

"Oh, no, don't think like that."

"But, Mom, I can't lose her. I can't lose her, too." Hiccup panicked. "I-I don't know what I'd do without her."

"We're never ready to lose loved ones. But you have to believe that it will all be fine. Don't you worry about it, Hiccup. This is a

woman's worry."

"How can I _not _worry now?" Hiccup said. "You just told me that my wife has a good chance of dying trying to bring our child into this world. How do I not freak out?"

Valka opened her mouth when a squawk above their room cut her words short. It was a moment before the front door opened and Astrid bounded through, pushing her fur hood down on her shoulders. Stormfly's blue and yellow wings flash by on the other side.

"Oh, what a day." Astrid sighed as she shut the door. She took a step to join them at the table but came to an abrupt halt. Her face fell. "What?"

Hiccup hadn't realized the look that must have been on his face. "Nothing, I just didn't expect you back so soon."

"Oh, I didn't either. But that inept little redheaded kid tripped and somehow jabbed himself with a Nadder's spine. They're up at Gothi's trying to suck out the point or something. We called it a day after that." Astrid sat down next to Hiccup with a bowl in her hands. "You can tell them a thousand times that they've got to mind the tails but Vikings are still as boneheaded as they used to be."

Hiccup was looking at her and trying to see what his mother called glowing. She looked like she always did. He pasted a glance at his mother who returned it with a smile.

"What?" Astrid asked again, a little irritated.

There came a ruckus from outside. "Hiccup, are you home?"

"Oh, duty calls." Hiccup sighed. Wonder what it was this time. A misplaced sheep? A stolen mug? Thor forbid somebody make their own decisions.

"What, Hiccup?"

"Nothing, babe." Hiccup got up and kissed her head before he left. "See you at dinner."

"Bye." Astrid said, a little struck. Valka waved.

Outside, Hiccup had a feeling he knew what they'd be talking about. The door shut behind him and it was a few seconds before he heard his mother and Astrid laughing on the other side. The knot loosened a little but still threatened to squeeze the life out of him.

"Hiccup!" "Hiccup!"

Duty was calling. Right now he had a chief's worries to think about. He would deal with worries as they came. If Astrid was with child then he would worry when he had to. Because right now he still had time to prepared to be a father.

7. Welcome Home

Title: Welcome Home

The horn sounded their arrival sometime between the darkest hours of night and the gray dawn. Its sudden blare shook many Vikings from their mild dreams and into the Berk chill. Astrid sprung from her bed, throwing the blanket to the floor, grabbing the axe from underneath her pillow, and readying herself through instinct.

As reality pushed the sleepy daze out she released her battle pose and dashed to the window. In the dreary morning distance she could see the tiny fluttering dots of incoming dragons. A glaring dot of light led the pack and it made Astrid's heart hammer.

"Hiccup!" Astrid shouted to the cold Berk air that suddenly wasn't a bother. A warmth exploded in her chest and she dropped her axe on the floor. By the time the metal came to a complete stillness she was at the bottom of stairs and skidding out of the front door.

The village was coming out of its doors, wiping tired eyes, readied to face whatever may come. At the sight of their own returning home the rejoicing resounded through the entire island. They gathered in the village center and stood on the Mead Hall's stairs as the dragon cloud came close.

Astrid shouted with the rest as the clouds became individual dragons. Her eyes fell upon the leading black mass whose rider held a flaming sword shone as a beacon. Her heart thumped against her ribcage and she thought for a moment it bounce out. She joined in the mighty cheers as the welcome their fellow Vikings back to the ground.

Toothless landed in the village center and the rest followed his lead. Hiccup extinguished his sword and Astrid hadn't noticed the early morning light that had started to stream through the western darkness. She ran to greet them, as did the village, with arms outstretched and hands clapping, mouths turned in genuine grins, ears ready to hear all that was to tell.

"Everyone to the Great Hall," Hiccup's shout came over the gathering village. He waved over their heads, standing on the saddle, motioned to the hall's stairs. His eyes met Astrid's and lingered for just a moment before retuning to the village.

Vikings began to head up the stairs, patting missed friends on the shoulder, eager to hear stories and new legends. Hiccup waited for the crowd to thin before he climbed down off Toothless.

"Is your leg bent?" Astrid asked, pointing to his left foot.

"Yeah, but that was mostly my fault." Hiccup shrugged. He was smiling and Astrid knew she was smiling too. She couldn't help it.

Hiccup reached out and pulled her closer, hugging her tight, resting his chin in the fur of her hood. She returned it, gratefully, and realized just how much she had missed him. His clothes hadn't been washed and his hair was dirty. No doubt they'd slept plenty of the nights outside next to Toothless.

"I missed you." Hiccup sighed into her hood.

"I missed you, too." Astrid had missed the sound of his voice. She wanted to stay like this for days, to make up for lost time, and when he pulled away she felt the space between them more than before.

"I brought something back you for," Hiccup said with that smile, giving her hands a squeeze, "but you'll have to wait until after I speak to the village."

"That's alright, Hiccup." Astrid nodded. She didn't want to stop looking at him. Thor, she had missed him. "I can wait a while longer."

Hiccup let go of her hands and left a quick peck on her lips. She followed him to the Great Hall where the Village anxiously awaited news of the outing. Hiccup stood on a chair to bring them to a silence.

Astrid couldn't help but grin at how eager they all looked to Hiccup. He was the same boy who'd been glared upon by the same Vikings, nearly shunned, and a constant disappointment. And now they looked to him for honorable leadership and unwavering bravery with unquestionable loyalty.

Hiccup had headed an outreached to neighboring tribes and islands to make an alliance against Drago and his possible reemergence. He had been concerned what ruckus the dragons might cause but after mild unsure greetings most people seemed less weary and more curious.

He, his mother, and a handful of Vikings had been gone for nearly two months on their venture. They came back with mostly good news, with the exceptions of a few stubborn and old fashioned tribes who rather shed blood than talk of peace. The village began the celebration that very morning, dancing with the sunrise, and drinking with breakfast.

And although there was accomplishments to be cheered about there were still chores to be done. Astrid was with Stormfly, keeping the wood stocked, when Hiccup found her.

"Hey," Hiccup called. He hadn't taken the time to fix his leg and he had a slight limp. They were lucky that it hadn't been Toothless's tail. If it had bent they wouldn't have been able to fly.

"How's your afternoon rounding up?" Astrid smiled. She could smell the sweet mead he'd no doubt been drinking.

"I've got something for you, come with me," Hiccup said, grabbing her arm lightly, letting his hand fall to her wrist, and gently urged her along with him. Laughing, she obliged.

They returned to his house where he'd tossed his satchel that he'd taken on the trip. He knelt down and dug inside it for a moment, then turned with a devilish grin, still hands in the bag.

"Close you eyes."

"Hiccup," Astrid complained. She didn't like these silly surprised. And he knew that. He enjoyed pushed those buttons.

"Just close you eyes," Hiccup's grin widened.

"Fine." Astrid closed her eyes and the scene of his hearth vanished. She heard him pull his hands from the bag and stand. His foot clinked on the floor as he closed the space between them. She felt his breath on her face and the proximity of his arms on either side of her head. "What are you doing?"

Just like that she felt something small fall onto her chest. She opened her eyes to see Hiccup withdrawing his arms. Instantly, her hands reached up to find a small blue gem hanging from a silver chain. The gem was sparkling and a deep vivid blue like nothing else she'd seen.

"Do you like it?" Hiccup asked, his tone careful, waiting.

"It's beautiful." Astrid was struck at the awe in her own voice. She rolled the gem around in her fingers admiring its amazing color. "Where did you find it?"

"A jeweler on one of the island heard that I'd left my wife at home. After we made peace agreements she gifted this to me. She said that when a man leaves his wife at home he should bring something either delicious or shiny back." Hiccup said, watching her expression.

"Thank you," Astrid couldn't hid the smile on her face. He really was amazing.

X

This turned out longer than I originally thought, but that's alright. I keep making fun of those silly jewelry store advertisements where the guy hands the girl a box and she gets this really cheesy and stupid look on her face like she just peed herself and he looks like he's a psychopath waiting for a bomb to explode. But then, giving a girl jewelry is a very cheesy moment and it's hard not to make it cheesy.

8. I am not a Tomato

This was a drabble requested via tumblr. Setting, Modern AU.

Title: I'm not a Tomato

The snow had stopped but it had left a shallow layer of fluff on rooftops and roads. The cars had left perfectly equidistant lines in the slush in the high school parking lot on their way to park as close to the door as possible. Hiccup and Astrid joined them, crushing the snow into soon-to-be February muddy mush. The high school auditorium was lit up for the show and reflected on the low-hanging winter evening clouds.

"We can still turn around!" Harold cried out from the backseat.

"But we're already here," Astrid turned her head around. Her four and a half year old son was holding tightly onto the seatbelt that held him into the car seat. He was looking out of his window with

terror.

"Yeah, but we didn't drive all the way here just to turn around." Hiccup turned off the engine and peered in the rearview mirror at Harold. He was smiling but his son did not return the gesture.

Harold was the spitting image of his father. He was skinny, nervous, and disliked confrontation. His red-brown hair was always a mess no matter how much his mother combed it and his eyes were the brightest green. Tonight was the debut of the preschool class's big play, All About Food.

"Alright, let's go, curtain's in twenty." Astrid signaled and both front doors open simultaneously.

Astrid, not wanting to mess with dirty shoes, carried Harold into the gym. Hiccup rushed ahead of her to open the gym door. Within seven minutes Harold was ushered backstage by the preschool teacher, who looked more frazzled than normal, and Hiccup and Astrid took their seats. The auditorium was dark and more than half the chairs were already full with enthusiastic parents and family. Several pairs of grandparents sat with cameras ready.

They sat in the middle and tried to find comfort in the metal chairs.

"Ah, it's been a while." Hiccup sighed.

"Hm? Since what?" Astrid asked.

"Since the last time I was at a school play." Hiccup nodded toward the long purple curtain that hid the stage. There were multiple shadows moving underneath it.

Astrid opened her mouth to ask, then her brow furled, "Are you taking about that first grade play?"

"It scarred me for life." Hiccup shook his head. "I was just trying to be the perfect tree, silent, sturdy, and then everything just collapsed."

"You tripped me." Astrid said flatly. "You ruined my acting career."

"You pushed me off the stage and I broke my arm. I was carried out in front of the entire audience on a stretcher." Hiccup said, a smile playing on his lips.

"Yeah, well, you deserved it." Astrid laughed. "I was going to be the next Jennifer Aniston. But right before my big scene, the tree that was supposed to be in the back ground sneezed, and somehow jumped forward, and tripped me."

Hiccup laughed. "I didn't move! You weren't watching where you were going."

"Oh, don't blame your clumsiness on me." Astrid was laughing. "It's not my fault you weren't standing where you should have been."

"I can still hear the audience laughing." Hiccup shook his head.

"Hey, at least we made the show." Astrid winked.

"Yeah, you made the jumpstart on your bullying career." Hiccup smiled.

The remaining lights dimmed and the audience shushed. The curtain parted and the hand-drawn and crayon-colored set was revealed. The jolly music started and one by one the preschoolers wobbled onto the stage. They were each dressed as a food and spoke a short poem into a center microphone.

"I am a carrot, orange and delicious. I am good for eyes and your brain."

"That doesn't rhyme." Hiccup whispered.

"Shh," Astrid patted his knee.

The carrot wobbled to the side while a banana came onto the stage.

"I am a banana. I am a fruit. I am great to eat and full of potassium."

"Who wrote this?" Hiccup smiled.

"Shh," Astrid patted his knee a little harder.

"I am rice. I am a grain. I am good for lots of energy."

"I am milk. I am loaded with calcium. I come from cows. Good to drink for strong bones."

"I am a cupcake. I am junk food. While I am sweet and tasty I am bad to eat. I am a treat not a food."

The cupcake almost tripped on its way to stand with the others.

"Oh, there he is." Astrid patted Hiccup's knee as Harold, dressed as a bright red tomato, waddled onto the stage. His face was as red as the tomato.

"I am a tomato." Harold stated. His voice was shaking.

"Oh no," Astrid said as Harold stalled. "Come on, 'I am a vegetable',"

Hiccup bit his lip and reached for Astrid's hand. Her nails were gripping into his pants.

"I-Iâ€¦" Harold stuttered.

"Oh," Astrid squeezed Hiccup's hand tight. She could see the collision coming and there wasn't time to avoid it.

"I am not a tomato!" Harold's eyes shut tight and he let out a heartbreaking sob. The other kids were watching, confused, while the

curtain was quickly whooshed closed. A murmur broke over the parent-filled audience.

"Come on," Astrid said. She nudged Hiccup to move.

They made their way through the audience and to the backstage. The kids that were waiting to go on were looking at Harold with wide eyes and open mouths. The teacher was sitting him down. When he saw his parents his sobs grew louder.

"Momma!" Harold's face was red and streaked with tears.

"It's okay!" Astrid said. She ran to the chair and wrapped her arms around him, tomato suit and all.

The teacher waved on the other kids. "Come on, let's continue the show! John, go, go! It's the apple's turn!"

Hiccup unbuttoned the tomato suit and held it while Astrid pulled him out of it.

"What happened, babe? We went over your lines a hundred times this morning." Astrid said, pushing his brown hair out of his wet face.

"But I'm not a tomato." Harold cried.

"I know, nobody is a tomato."

"I wanted to be the strawberry."

"Oh, that makes sense." Hiccup said.

"What?" Astrid looked at him.

"Strawberries are better."

Harold cried onto his mother's shoulder. She glared at Hiccup, as if to say _You're making_ _it_ _worse_. He nodded an apology.

"I guess acting just isn't in the Haddock blood." Hiccup shrugged. He patted Harold on the back, "Hey, buddy, what do you say to some ice cream?"

"Ice cream? Hiccup, it's thirty degrees outside." Astrid said.

"I want some ice cream." Harold said into his mother's shirt.

She glared at her husband.

"What?" Hiccup shrugged. "My parents took me out for ice cream after my play incident. It made it better."

"Fine." Astrid said. "Ice cream."

X

A/N - Okay, as some of you might have noticed, I've changed the rating for this drabble/one-shot collections. I only have two collections, this one, which was rated K+, and the other, which is rated M. I didn't want to make another collection for the T rated one, because as of right now I don't have a lot, but I foresee more, so I upped the rating of Biscuits. I will inform you all before the stories of the ratings, as I've done in this one.

X

Title: Goodnight, Milady

Rating: T

They'd talked through most of the storm, pushing out the rattling downpour with laughter. The weather had changed that early afternoon, black skies warring in and swallowing the blue sky whole, leaving the Edge in a dark gloom. The dark was heavy enough that through Hiccup's door, he couldn't even see the other riders' huts.

"You'd better stay until the rain lets up," Hiccup had said to Astrid. "I wouldn't want you getting lost in the rain."

"That's sweet," Astrid had said with a shy smile that always sent a fire through his blood.

They'd just hung out after that, sitting and talking, waiting for a let up in the storm that never really came. Stormfly and Toothless both seemed unperturbed by the extended visit and took to napping. The sky darkened, but the rain persisted. Thunder pounded on the sky and lightning flashed through the night.

"It's not really letting up," Astrid said, fighting through a yawn.

Hiccup swallowed the lump in his throat. "You know, Astrid, I mean, it wouldn't be a problem if you just stayed here for the night."

Astrid turned sharply on her heels, an uncertain look of confusion and disbelief on her fair face. Suddenly, heat rushed to his face.

"Did I-I say something wrong?" Hiccup shuffled his feet.

Astrid blinked. "No, it's justâ€¦you know, when aâ€¦when someone invites someone else to spend the night, typically, it impliesâ€¦"

Hiccup coughed, "Oh! That's notâ€¦what I meant, I just, you know, it's storming, it's dark, and it wouldn't beâ€¦it might be dangerous to fly back through. That's all."

"That's all." Astrid repeated, matter-of-factly.

"That is all." Hiccup cleared his throat. The storm had chilled the air, but his skin was burning.

"It would be a risk to fly back, and not to mention I'd get soaked," Astrid said, taking steps back toward Hiccup.

Hiccup swallowed, trying to push down the lump, but it was firmly stationed. Astrid came to stand beside him, twiddling a strand of hair.

"Yeah,"

"Yeah."

Toothless snorted in his sleep.

Astrid walked cautiously to the bed, as if the flooring would give out at any moment, and gently sat on the edge. Hiccup's chest squeezed in on itself.

"Soâ€|uhâ€|" Astrid asked, looking flustered.

Hiccup had to blink and tear his eyes away from her. She rarely looked anything but confident and ready, but those moment when she didn't were absolutely incredible. Her edges softened and her lips would twist upward, ever so slightly. Hiccup was sure there was never a moment when she looked unattractive. Even when she was furious, she was beautiful.

"Yeah," Hiccup sighed as he began to unbuckle his armor.

Astrid tensed, her hands fisting in the blanket. "What are you doing?"

"Hm?" Hiccup blinked. "What? I don't sleep in this."

"Oh, right," Astrid nodded. There was a tint of pink in her cheeks.

"Do you sleep in all of that?" Hiccup motioned to her clothes.

"Oh, uh, no." Astrid bit her lip. She stood up and loosened the weight from her shoulders.

"Don't watch me," Astrid snapped.

"You were watching me."

Her face reddened and she turned her back to him, her hair whipping around her shoulders. Hiccup fought down a smile as he turned his back to her. For a moment, the only sound was the removal of metal and leather. Hiccup's armor was sitting on the trunk that doubled as a work desk.

Astrid was still undressing, it seemed, by the sounds. Red flushing into his cheeks as the word _undressing _crossed his mind, especially when so close to _Astrid_. Heat pooled in his stomach and his nerves were threatening to jump out of his body.

"I'm ready," Astrid said.

He heard a footfall behind him and he looked over his shoulder. Astrid was looking at him, arms folded over her chest. Without her skirt, she looked skinny, but the curve of her hip stirred something inside of him that refused to let him take his eyes away. Astrid

walked to the bed, long legs keeping his attention. She sat down on the edge and laid her hands in her lap.

"Okay," Hiccup said. He reached for the candle and blew it out, plunging them both into darkness. For a moment, it was only rain and thunder, splashed with white lightning.

Hiccup found his way to the bed, where Astrid still sat on the edge. Hiccup sat beside her. Admittedly, it was awkward to climb into the bed with someone else doing the same, so close. They were both underneath the blanket, close enough to each other to feel the body heat. Hiccup inhaled and held it, listening to Astrid's breathing, to the storm raging outside. The wood of the hut creaked.

"Night," Astrid said quietly.

"Goodnight, Milady."

X

Hiccup stirred as a bright flash of lightning accompanied a harsh clap of thunder that shook the entire hut. At first, nothing seemed out of place. Then, a warmth on his chest ebbed away the rest of his slumber. There was hot breath on his neck, sending gooseflesh down his spine. He placed a hand over his chest, finding a hand already there.

"Hiccup?" Astrid's soft sigh kissed his cheek.

"Something wrong?"

"No," Astrid said. Her body was against his, and she was making no immediate moves to shift. She swallowed. Hiccup could feel the movement in her throat. "I guess it was just the storm."

"Yeah, it must've picked up out there," Hiccup whispered.

Astrid scooted closer, or it seemed that way. Hiccup laced his fingers with hers anyway. When she didn't pull away, but exhaled onto his neck, his skin prickled and his heart skipped a beat.

10. Girl Talk

A/N - Originally, I thought about making this one-shot into something a little longer, but I decided against it. At least for the time being. So, before you ask me to extend it, I'm going to tell you straight up - I'm not writing anything more to this. It's a one-shot, ONE-shot.

P.S. - Contains Race to the Edge spoilers, so if you haven't watched it, and don't want to be spoiled, don't read. I warned you.

X

Title: Girl Talk

Rating - T

Warning - Heathstrid

"Knock, knock," said a smooth voice from the door, accompanied by a quick knock on the wood.

Astrid turned on her heel at the voice, and smiled when Heather stepped inside, the morning sunlight shining in after her.

"You came back?" Astrid said, closing the space between them. She pulled the other girl into an embrace.

"Yeah, I thought about it, and Windshear agreed, that it would be alright if we stayed here just a bit longer." Heather gave a nod to the silvery dragon lingering in the door.

"That's great!" Astrid clapped. "I was just about to head up to the club house. Hiccup wants to have meetings in the mornings. Like debriefings or something."

"Sounds exciting."

"It's not, really." Astrid shrugged.

Heather sat on the edge of the bed. "So, uh, is everything alright between you two?"

Astrid dropped her axe and it clanked to silence on the floor, chipping a large splinter out. "Yeah, why?"

"You said his name with a tone."

"No, I didn't," Astrid denied. Had she?

Heather laughed, "Okay, you didn't. But back to the original question, is it alright?"

Astrid tightened her hands around the grip of the axe. The blade was getting a little dull.

"Astrid?"

"I don't know."

"What's not to know?" Heather leaned back on the bed and padded the seat beside her. Astrid sighed, and set the axe down and sat down. Heather added, "You can talk to me. I keep secrets like an iron trap."

"Well, I kept thinking about what you said, about seeing how we are around each other, and I kept thinking that I don't know what we are."

"You and Hiccup?"

"Yeah," Astrid nodded. "We kissed, well, I kissed him. I thoughtâ€¦I thought that, I don't know, maybe he would do something about it. You know?"

"Like what?"

"Like his own move. I thought I made my feelings clear, but he's not he hasn't." Astrid stood up and started to pace. It helped her thoughts and feelings collide. "I don't know what to think. I don't know what he's thinking. Sometimes, I get this feeling like he knows, like he likes me more than a friend, but most of the time it's like were not. And if I bring it up, or say anything remotely related to feelings, he shuts me out like I'm not even there."

"I would suggest talking to him, but if that's already been done," Heather started, but Astrid interrupted.

"I don't want to keep pushing, you know?" Her voice was softer than she'd anticipated. Her chest was thumping, harder than it should, like it does when she tries to talk to Hiccup about these things. It felt like exposure, and she hated it. She crossed her arms over her chest to hold it in place. "I don't want him to think I'm forcing it on him, and then have him push me away."

"Maybe, and this is just a theory, that his growing up with a single father has left him lacking in the affection department," Heather suggested, standing up. She took several long strides to stand in front of Astrid. "You know, Stoick isn't affectionate either. So for Hiccup it could be both inherited and learned."

"That makes sense, I guess. But is it really that hard for them to just say what their thinking? I mean, 'Hey, Astrid, I like you more than a friend.' That's not that hard, unless he doesn't."

"Oh, I think he does." Heather smiled. "You might not have noticed, but I've seen the way he looks at you, like disbelief and admiration. He looks away when you look at him, like he doesn't want you to see him staring. It's cute."

Astrid sighed. "I've never seen him do that."

"He does it a lot. But, boys are weird that like," Heather said with a shrug. "They can never just come out and say what they want, it's like they want you to read their mind."

"Well, I can't," Astrid spat. She gave a short laugh and added, "You know, I used to think that it was because I kissed him first, and he thought I was bad at it or something."

"Are you?"

"I don't know, its hard to kiss myself and find out." Astrid laughed, but her laughter was cut short by Heather, who had pressed her lips against Astrid's. The moment was short, but it left Astrid with a fluttering in her chest that radiated out to her limbs, into her hands and to the bottom of her feet.

"I'll give you the benefit of the doubt on that one, because I caught you by surprise," Heather said. She was close enough still that she didn't need to speak very loud; her warm breath fluttered against Astrid's face.

The lack of formalities left her breathless, taken back, and stunned. She blinked at Heather's unassuming smile, sly and tricky. What was she thinking? Her smile flickered, her pale green eyes searched Astrid's face. A slender-fingered hand slid across Astrid's cheek,

and this time Astrid was prepared when Heather came back.

Her lips were soft, delicate, and moved with her own in a way that she didn't understand. Heather's other hand pulled her waist closer, and Astrid put her own trembling hands on the other girl, tangling in her dark hair. Heather separated, but didn't move away.

"I don't see the problem," Heather whispered. "You kiss just fine."

Astrid wasn't sure if she should laugh, it sounded like something that should be humorous, but no such feeling emerged. Instead, something else was felt, a heat on her skin, a shake in her chest, a tremor in her stomach. Heather's finger gently caressed her cheekbone.

"Hey," Astrid whispered. She'd never felt so awkward, although she wasn't used to being this close with anyone.

"Hey," Heather grinned.

What should she do now? Astrid's heart flipped up and down, beating faster than she thought possible, and skipped a beat when she met Heather halfway, feeling her warm tongue on her lips. Their tongues met in Astrid's mouth, an unfamiliar feeling, but oddly pleasant. Heather's hand on Astrid's cheek moved into her hair, pulling her closer still, her hand on her waist slid around her.

CRASH.

They broke apart so suddenly that the loss of contact felt like walking to a snowstorm. Astrid blinked, knowing the look of surprise on Heather's face mirrored her own. Standing in the door of the hut was Hiccup, eyes wide and mouth gapping, Toothless behind him a step, looking as hopelessly confused. He'd dropped a book on the floor.

"Hiccup?" Astrid asked, shocked at her own breathlessness. "What's up?"

She caught Heather's smile. What had she said?

"I-I was just uh you weren't at the, uh, meeting, today, right now, and I thought, I don't know, I was just" Hiccup took a step back, swinging his arms. He swallowed. "Heather, you're back! It's good to see you again uh, I'm going, uh, I'm going to go."

Astrid looked back at Heather, who had been covering her grin with a hand.

"Well, that was awkward." Heather dropped her hand.

"Do you think he'll be upset?"

"Probably not in the way that you're thinking," Heather said. "He's probably confused. He's never had to worry about me stealing you before."

Astrid laughed, but her chest felt empty and shaken.

X

An Afterthought - Yes, I ship Heather and Astrid, but I ship their bromance a lot more. I love Heather's placement in Astrid's life, because Astrid is a woman in a man's world. She's had to learn not to let her sex be a status, not to let it interfere with being as strong as anyone else, and she's kind of been the only "girl" in her age group, besides Ruff, and Heather gives her a female friends that's kind of her equal. She's never had a girl friend before and it's awesome.

11. Snowstorm

A/N - URGH, I've got such a rude writer's block right now, AND a stomach ache. Today's been great. I did manage to squeeze this out of my brain last night. I'm taking a nap after this. Enjoy my current mediocrity.

X

Title: Snowstorm

Rating: K+

Disclaimer: Cuddling

Hiccup had paid no mind to the thickening gray clouds to the north. Clouds came and went daily, some never giving much more than a flighty shadow on the ground. So when Astrid suggested they hold off going straight north, he dismissed her worries.

"Nah, it'll be fine," Hiccup said as they left the Edge behind on the day's exploration. Winter's grip has finally weakened, and after a week long grounding, they're able to fly. To further prove his stubborn disbelief, he pointed up toward the bright blue sky. "See? We're in the clear!"

Astrid did not argue further, however her furled brow and shrug told Hiccup that she'd sighed. The dragons flew on toward the north. Hiccup had been planning to expand the northern portion of his map, which had of yet remained blank. There had to be something up there. He'd find it, too, or else look he'd look until he found the world's edge.

Fishlegs had come down with a cold, and then shared it with Meatlug, who shared it with the other dragons in the stable. That morning when the riders had met to leave for their exploration, they others had shown up with red eyes and redder noses, and sneezing that would put Stoick the Vast to shame.

"I guess it's just me and you, today," Hiccup had shrugged, not feeling the least bit upset that the others had chosen to remain at the Edge. He was more surprised than he and Astrid had remained unaffected, although he didn't complain.

"Kind of like old times," Astrid had said with a smile.

They'd searched with Berk as their epicenter and one by one the riders had found other niches, until just Hiccup and Astrid remained.

Even though hope had dwindled of new dragons, the time spent with Astrid hadn't been unpleasant at all.

Hiccup kept his eyes open for anything, even the tiniest of lands, but so far the north remained exactly as his map currently said, empty ocean. He checked the compass again, sure north.

"Hiccup?" Astrid called from behind him.

He turned over his shoulder. Her eyes were looking ahead. Following her gaze, he saw what she did, the distant gray clouds had churned quickly into towering frozen pillars.

"Maybe we should turn back before it reaches us?" Astrid suggested.

"It might not be anything," Hiccup shouted over the wind.

The clouds moved faster than the dragons could fly. Fierce, cold winds pushed them back, stinging their skin and eyes. Toothless whined, batting his eyes against the wind.

"It's alright, bud," Hiccup

Toothless disagreed audibly and gave his head a shake.

"Hiccup?" Astrid asked over Stormfly's chatter.

Hiccup opened his mouth to dismiss their uncertainty, when the first tiny pellet of ice stuck his cheek. More joined its course, and the gray clouds swallowed them whole, surrounding them with thick swirling winds spitting ice and snow. Hiccup lowered his face from the oncoming storm. Astrid shouted something, undoubtedly her displeasure, which Hiccup mirrored. He urged Toothless to fly lower, closer to land should it appear, giving them a place to cover from the increasingly strong storm.

Hiccup couldn't see through the storm and ice that stung his eyes. Toothless whined urgency, and through the gray, Hiccup squinted at an emerging solidity.

"There!" Hiccup tried to say, but ice stabbed through his words. He coughed, as the ice stung the back of his throat.

Toothless shot sound through the darkness, calling to Stormfly behind him, who signaled back. The winds shifted as mountainous island rose in front of them. Hiccup flattened himself onto the saddle and in a short moment the storm died out and Toothless landed on solid ground.

"Are you okay?" Hiccup asked before he looked around. He scanned the dark cavern quickly, and upon seeing nothing remarkable, he turned around to where Astrid and Stormfly landed behind them.

Astrid groaned as she wiped glistening ice crystals off her face. They littered her hair and clothes. Hiccup pulled himself from the saddle as Astrid's feet hit the floor. The dim daylight barely leaked inside through the storm.

"Give us some light," Hiccup said as he gave Toothless an encouraging

pat. He fired a bright blue plasma blast which lingered on the wall opposite them.

"I guess you found your new land," Astrid said with a weak smile. She held her arms tightly around her.

Hiccup sighed. "Let's go deeper and see if we can find some driftwood or something. We need a fire before we freeze to death."

X

Between the two dragons, they managed enough light to find bone-dry, age-old driftwood. Away from the loose snow of the cave's mouth, the fire burst to life and warmth. The dragons nestled around it like a safety wall between their riders and the rest of the cavern, with the fire in the center.

Astrid wrapped her arms around herself. The ice had melted into freezing water that soaked through her. She shivered, but Hiccup did to. The fire had helped considerably, but she was still uncomfortable.

"We'll wait until the storm dies down and head back," Hiccup said.

"How long do you think it'll last?"

"I don't know," Hiccup shrugged. "It's hard to say. Hopefully not too long. We've only got enough rations for about a day, two if we stretch."

Astrid nodded, looking into the bright fire, the heat on her cheeks made her back feel colder.

"Are you okay?" Hiccup asked, rubbing his hands together over the fire. The bright orange reflected in his eyes, like they held tiny fires inside his skull.

"I'm just cold," Astrid sighed. She scooted closer to him.

Hiccup hesitated, his hands stilled over the crackling flames. His lips parted slightly, but no words came out, and after a moment he pushed them back together. He leaned back onto his bottom and rested one hand on his knee, the other outstretched toward her.

"Come here," he said. "I'll keep you warm."

Astrid closed the gap between them, nestling into his side, and his arm fell around her. She pushed into his warmth, which mirrored her own pitiful state, and huddled against him. He seemed to lean into her, or she might have been leaning into him.

"Better?" Hiccup asked, his voice a whisper against her cheek.

"Hmm," Astrid hummed as she leaned her head toward him. His breath fell against her lips, hot compared to the freezing air. Realizing her stare, she glanced back up to his eyes. "Yes."

His eyes flickered downward, and a her heart fluttered with the hope

that he'd lean in, close the tiny space between them. He hesitated, and she couldn't stand it. She closed the space, pushing her lips against his for a moment. She broke the kiss, but did not lean away. The break didn't last, for Hiccup closed the tiny space again.

He tightened his arm around her, hugging her close, and his other traced her jaw before sliding down her shoulder with awkward grace, and settling on her waist.

"You know, I'm kind of glad that the others couldn't come with us." Hiccup's thumb draw a line on her side.

"This would have awkward," Astrid smirked.

Hiccup blushed, and she kissed him quick. He laughed and hugged her tight, kissing her cheek. His breath was warm against her chilled cheek as he said, "How long do you think this storm will last?"

"However long I want it to." Astrid kissed him again, hesitating against his lips, holding her hands on his cheek and neck. She wanted to feel his warmth completely. She tilted his chin and kissed him again, not caring how long the storm would block the sky, because it didn't matter. Hiccup mattered, and she did, and the space they encumbered.

12. Girl on the Train

A/N â€" Wrote this at work a few weeks ago. I posted it on Tumblr, but I forgot about it. I found it tonight and decided to share it here too.

Modern AU

X

Title: girl on the train

It's bitterly cold and the train smells like cabbage and dirty snow. That snow lines the floor, most of it's melted, running in lines down the aisle. He's sitting by the window, on his way to visit his mother for the holidays, and feels a cold coming on. No one covers their mouth anymore, it's no wonder the whole world isn't fallen down sick and dead. In front of him a few rows, a man with dreads listens to thumping headphones, hung around his neck, with some unintelligible rap song competing with the rumble of the wheels and rapid pit-pat of December flurries.

He checks his watch â€" still four hours to go. He sighs and leans back in his hard plastic seat. He's lucked out so far, no one has taken the seat beside him. When the train stops he tries to look unpleasant so no one will willingly sit by him. That makes him unsocial and unfriendly, but if it saves him from sitting next to the cat woman again, so be it. Or the chatty group of underage girls trying to look older.

The train slows in the next stop, and he stretches out his long legs to take up more room. If they have to ask him to move, no one will sit by him. The doors swish open and people file out, people file in,

but more seats are full now. The doors haven't closed yet, but there's no more people filing in from the cold. He wishes they would close, that air is terrible on his cheeks.

"Wait," someone calls. The doors begin to swish together and someone just squeezes through. She's blonde and wrapped in a gray coat. Her hair is braided back and falling loose. She's pretty, but distracted. She quickly scans the train as it begins to move for a place to sit.

He stirs a little, looks away as her eyes meet his, and looks down at his hands, the floor, anywhere, as his usual protocol. She moves, he can hear her coat, and a plop beside him tells him she's next to him.

"This seat's not taken, right?" she asked, in a tone that meant she didn't care.

"No," he said. "Not unless you're talking about yourself, then yes."

She smiled. She had big blue eyes. Blonde hair fell into her face. She brushed it behind her ear. She smells nice. Maybe this trip won't be that bad.

13. Sweet Dreams

A/N â€" Set during Race to the Edge, after the last episode. Contains spoilers.

****Rated â€" Between T and K+****

****Advisory â€" Cuddling/RTTE Spoilers ****

X

****Title: Sweet Dreams****

The storm in his eyes raged, vicious winds troubled his mind, foggy and unclear, and she knew there was little she could do about it. She had tried calming words and reassurances. She had given him time and space to think. Still, Viggo's triumph had left him bitter, swollen and wounded, reverted back three years to a village runt who couldn't do anything right. He slumped, shrunk in on himself, forgetting the things he had done, forgetting the great things he had accomplished, the lives he had changed for the better.

Hiccup mulled over the Maces and Talons piece yet again, as if waiting for it to whisper the answer to him, and if he put it down he might miss it.

"I don't know what else to tell you," Astrid said finally. She'd been everything but stern with him. "Viggo won. You lost. There's nothing you can do to change that now."

Hiccup's grip tightened.

Astrid sighed, uncrossing her arms. They fell to her sides. "Okay, I'm going to bed for the night. See you tomorrow."

She hadn't meant those words to come out as irritated as they did. She had kept her anger at Hiccup hidden. He didn't need to know about it and he had been twice as hard on himself as she would have.

"Astrid," Hiccup breathed, nearly inaudible.

Astrid paused by his hut door, but after a moment she doubted he'd even spoken. His eyes hadn't moved from the game piece. She waited for more to follow, and when none did, she reached for the door.

"I need to be ready," Hiccup said.

"For what?"

"When he comes back," Hiccup shrugged, closing his hand around the piece. He turned to her, eyes red and circled with shadows. "I need to go over everything for the next time I see him. He won't best me again."

"What if he does?" Astrid crossed her arms.

"What?"

"What if he does best you again?" Astrid shrugged, motioning toward the piece. "So there's someone out there smarter than you. So what? That's Snotlout's entire life."

"I have to win, Astrid," Hiccup said pointedly. "Lives are at stake. What about the dragons?"

"What about you?" Astrid pointed at his chest. "You're falling apart. You haven't slept, you barely eat, and you haven't flown once in the past three days. I'm worried about you."

"I'm fine, I just--"

"Just have to keep staring at that thing until you figure it out?" Astrid snapped, more bitterly than she wanted. "Maybe that's his whole game. To freak you out to the point where you're useless."

Hiccup's glare sharpened. "What?"

"Maybe his strategy is just to mess with you, to make you think there's some big elaborate plan where he knows everything. Maybe your strategy should be to not have a strategy. Freak him out. Counter-freak him." Astrid hadn't slept well either, and she would later contribute her ramblings to exhaustion.

Hiccup blinked, and looked back down at the piece. His thumb ran along the face. "Huh."

"Right?" Astrid gestured toward the piece. "See? I'm a genius. You don't give me enough credit."

Hiccup, for the first time in a while, smiled. A short chuckle escaped his throat, dry from misuse. He set the piece down on the shelf and closed the space between him and Astrid in a few

long-legged strides. He snaked his arms around her, pulling her to him, and sighed into her hair.

"Thanks, Astrid," he said.

"Anytime," Astrid said as she returned his hug. He'd grown into the perfect shape for hugging. "If you need to be yelled at some more, just come get me."

Hiccup chuckled again, a welcome sound in her ear. He squeezed her. "It's late, Astrid, why not just stay over here?"

"It's not that far away." Astrid pointed toward her hut, through his closed door.

"I know," Hiccup nodded. He moved just enough to look at her, keeping his embrace. "But I don't want to be alone tonight."

"Toothless?" Astrid said as a question.

"I know, but it's not the same as having you around." Hiccup's tired smile warmed something deep in her chest, his words set a fire underneath it. Her throat tightened. Her chest skipped. Butterflies twirled. Heat rose to her cheeks. She took too long to answer, and Hiccup slipped his arms from her waist, eyes on the floor. "I know, I know, I'm sorry. It's justâ€¦I thoughtâ€¦"

"Hiccup." Astrid retook the step between them. "I would love to stay."

His face lit up with his tired smile.

A few awkward moments later, Astrid lay under the blanket in Hiccup's bed. Toothless curled on his stone slab, wary eyes watching. Hiccup blew out the candle, taking the light with it, plunging the hut into darkness. His uneven footsteps sounded on the floor, and his weight met the bed. Astrid held her breath as the blanket moved. Air swished out of the pillow. Hiccup's breathing brushed against her cheeks.

"Goodnight," Astrid whispered.

"Goodnight," Hiccup whispered back.

Astrid had trouble sleeping. She dozed, and woke up with Hiccup against her back. One of his arms rested underneath the pillow, jutting it at an odd angle, and the other had a hold of her hair. Somehow, she drifted back into sleep, but only to wake up again with an arm securely around her middle. Hiccup's chest pressed against her back. His heart beat calmly against her spine. His breaths puffed on the back of her neck, sliding to her ear and across her cheek.

The next time Astrid woke, a hand not her own rested against the skin of her stomach. A small moment of panic, and then she realized. The hand belonged to Hiccup. He had undone her shirt in the night and poked his hand underneath. It loosely pressed against her stomach. His body cradled hers, legs folded into hers, lips against her neck, breathing evenly.

Toothless snored on the other side of the room. The first light of

dawn colored the creases in the doorway gray-blue. Astrid wouldn't mind staying like this for a while, but sleep swan underneath the surface, and she knew it would pull her down again.

When Astrid woke up for the last time, Hiccup pecked a short kiss on her temple. He sat up, moving his body away from hers, and she rolled onto her back.

"Good morning," Astrid said as Hiccup yawned.

"Hey," Hiccup leaned back down, a sleepy grin on his face. Toothless yawned and stretched.

Astrid rolled over onto her side, facing him, and laid her head on his shoulder. She flattened her hand against his shirt. Toothless watched, his green eyes unblinking, waiting for them to move.

"How was your night?" Astrid asked, if anything to keep him in bed longer.

"Good," Hiccup said. "I haven't slept that well in a while."

Astrid smiled. She had something else on the tip of her tongue, but Toothless' grumble pushed the words back down her throat. The dragon inched toward the bed and nosed Hiccup's hair. He exhaled, blowing the bed-head tangle about. Hiccup reached up to pat him, gently pushing him back, a bright smile on his face.

"Alright, alright," Hiccup half-laughed as he sat up, putting both feet on the ground. "I'm awake."

Astrid rested on her elbows while Hiccup pulled on his leather riding gear. He'd slowly added more and more to it, and like everything else it was something only Hiccup could have put together. Toothless waited impatiently, shaking to get up in the sky.

"A morning flight sound good to you?" Hiccup asked. Toothless warbled. Hiccup playfully hugged Toothless' head, his two thin arms not making it all the way around, laughing.

Yeah, Hiccup would be okay.

"You coming, Astrid?" Hiccup asked as he and Toothless headed for the door.

Toothless made a face, and Astrid laughed. "Sure, Stormfly's an early riser."

He'd be just fine.

End
file.